

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Currently Amended) An information management apparatus for managing service-related information in a system having in which a plurality of electronic apparatuses are linked therein via network, ~~so as to work~~ the electronic apparatuses being for working in liaison with each other to implement a desired service, the information management apparatus comprising:

a service-specific information acquisition section for acquiring service-specific information which (i) is related to a combination of types of electronic apparatuses required for implementing a service and (ii) contains information related to an application that is operable on each of the electronic apparatuses which implement the service and used for implementing the service;

a storage section for storing at least one piece of service-specific information acquired by the service-specific information acquisition section;

an apparatus-specific information acquisition section for acquiring apparatus-specific information ~~which is related to each of the plurality of electronic apparatus of the system-~~ apparatuses;

a request reception section for receiving search requests from the electronic apparatuses;

a search section for searching for the service which can be implemented by the electronic apparatuses of the system, the searching being (i) conducted in response, responsive to a search request received by the request reception section, searching for the service, which can be implemented by the electronic apparatuses, and (ii) based on the service-specific information stored in the storage section and the apparatus-specific information acquired by the apparatus-specific information acquisition section; and

a transmission section for transmitting, to the electronic apparatuses of the system, a search result which identifies ~~is information indicating~~ a listing of services which can be implemented by the electronic apparatuses of the system; and

an update notification section for notifying the electronic apparatuses of the system that an updated version of the application, that is operable on each of the electronic apparatuses which implement the service, exists, if the stored service-specific information includes information related to the application that, based on the search result, indicates that an updated

version of the application is available.

Claim 2 (Cancelled)

Claim 3 (Cancelled)

Claim 4 (Currently Amended) The information management apparatus according to claim-
3, 1, further comprising an application acquisition section for acquiring the updated version of
the application[[,]] if the information related to the application indicates that an updated version
of the application is available; ~~acquiring the updated version of the application, wherein, when~~
~~the electronic apparatuses are notified of the updated version-update of the application, if the~~
~~electronic apparatuses provide the transmission section with a notice for downloading the~~
~~updated application, the transmission section is adapted to transmit-transmits the updated version~~
of the application to the electronic apparatuses if the electronic apparatuses provide the
transmission section with a notice to download the updated version of the application.

Claim 5 (Cancelled)

Claim 6 (Currently Amended) The information management apparatus according to claim
1, wherein:

~~a server for managing the service-specific information is present on the network;~~
the apparatus-specific information acquisition section is adapted to acquire-acquires the
apparatus-specific information associated with the electronic apparatuses from the electronic
apparatuses; and
the service-specific information acquisition section is adapted to acquire-acquires the
service-specific information from the a server which is for managing the service-specific
information and which is present on the network.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended) The information management apparatus according to claim
6, further comprising:

an inquiry section for inquiring of the server whether the service-specific information stored in the storage section has been updated; and

a notification section for notifying the electronic apparatuses that the service-specific information has been updated[[,]] if a result of the inquiry by the inquiry section indicates that an update of the service-specific information has been updated, ~~notifying the electronic apparatuses the service-specific information has been updated.~~

Claim 8 (Currently Amended) The information management apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the inquiry section is adapted to make~~makes~~ an inquiry to the server at regular intervals.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended) The information management apparatus according to claim 7, further comprising an update section for updating the service-specific information stored in the storage section[[,]] if a result of the inquiry by the inquiry section indicates that an update of the service-specific information has been updated, ~~updating the service-specific information stored in the storage section.~~

Claim 10 (Currently Amended) The information management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein:

the apparatus-specific information acquisition section is adapted to acquire~~acquires~~ the apparatus-specific information associated with the electronic apparatuses from the electronic apparatuses; and

the service-specific information acquisition section is adapted to acquire~~acquires~~ the service-specific information from the electronic apparatuses.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended) The information management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein:

the service-specific information related to the combination of the types of the electronic apparatuses ~~which is contained in the service-specific information~~ is related to a combination of models of the electronic apparatuses;

the information management apparatus further comprises a specification section which is adapted to (i) refer~~refers~~ to the service-specific information stored in the storage section and related to the service to be implemented by the electronic apparatuses, and (ii) specify~~specifies~~ a model of one electronic apparatus which works in liaison with another electronic apparatus to implement the service; and

the transmission section is adapted to transmit~~transmits~~ information which identifies~~indicates~~ the electronic apparatuses specified by the specification section to the electronic apparatuses which are used to implement the service.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended) The information management apparatus according to claim-
2, 1, further comprising:

a cease confirmation section for confirming the presence or absence of a ceased service corresponding to the service-specific information stored in the storage section; and

a request section for requesting the electronic apparatuses storing an application which corresponds to the ceased service to delete the stored application[[,]] if the cease confirmation section determines that a there is the ceased service exists among services corresponding to~~associated with the service-specific information stored in the storage section, requesting the electronic apparatuses having stored therein an application associated with the ceased service to delete the application therefrom.~~

Claim 13 (Currently Amended) The information management apparatus according to claim-
2, 1, further comprising:

a cease confirmation section for confirming the presence or absence of a ceased service corresponding to the service-specific information stored in the storage section; and

a deletion section for deleting the service-specific information, which corresponds to a ceased service, from the storage section[[,]] if the cease confirmation section determines that there is the a ceased service exists among services corresponding to~~associated with the service-specific information stored in the storage section, deleting the service-specific information associated with the ceased service from the storage section.~~

Claim 14 (Currently Amended) The information management apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

an apparatus-specific information storage section for storing the apparatus-specific information acquired by the apparatus-specific information acquisition section; and

an information deletion section for, ~~responsive to a request from the electronic apparatus,~~ deleting the apparatus-specific information stored in the apparatus-specific information storage section in response to a request from the electronic apparatuses.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended) The information management apparatus according to claim 14, wherein, in response to the request from the electronic apparatuses, the information deletion section, ~~responsive to the request from the electronic apparatuses,~~ is adapted to delete-deletes the apparatus-specific information while deleting service-specific information related to services for which the electronic apparatuses, which correspond to-associated with the deleted apparatus-specific information, are used from among service-specific information related to services which can be implemented by the electronic apparatuses.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended) The information management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein:

when an additional electronic apparatus is newly ~~added anew~~ to the system, the apparatus-specific information acquisition section is adapted to acquire,-acquires from the additional electronic apparatus, information related to a user of the additional electronic apparatus together with the apparatus-specific information; and

the information management apparatus further comprises:

a user information management section for managing user-related information;

a user authentication section for determining whether to register the apparatus-specific information acquired by the apparatus-specific information acquisition section ~~the user information management section~~ using (i) the user-related information managed by the user information management section and (ii) the user-related information acquired by the apparatus-specific information acquisition section; and

an apparatus-specific information storage section for storing the apparatus-

specific information acquired by the apparatus-specific acquisition section[[,]] if the user authentication section determines to register the apparatus-specific information, ~~storing the apparatus-specific information acquired by the apparatus-specific information acquisition section.~~

Claim 17 (Previously Presented) The information management apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

an apparatus-specific information storage section for storing apparatus-specific information transmitted from and associated with the electronic apparatuses; and

an apparatus determination section for determining whether the apparatus-specific information corresponding to the electronic apparatuses associated with the service-specific information obtained by the search section is stored in the apparatus-specific information storage section.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended) The information management apparatus according to claim 17, further comprising an absent electronic apparatus notification section for notifying the electronic apparatuses, which have provided a search request, of the type of the electronic apparatus corresponding to the apparatus-specific information which is not stored in the apparatus-specific information storage section[[,]] if the apparatus determination section determines that the apparatus-specific information corresponding to a type of an electronic apparatus associated with the service-specific information obtained by the search section is not stored in the apparatus-specific information storage section, ~~notifying the electronic apparatuses, which have provided a search request, of the type of the electronic apparatus corresponding to the apparatus-specific information which is not stored in the apparatus-specific information storage section.~~

Claim 19 (Currently Amended) The information management apparatus according to claim 17, wherein, if the apparatus determination section determines that the apparatus-specific information corresponding to the a type of the electronic apparatus associated with the service-specific information obtained by the search section is not stored in the apparatus-specific

information storage section, then the storage section does not store the service-specific information obtained by the search section.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended) An information management method of using an information management apparatus for managing service-related information in a system having- ~~in which a plurality of electronic apparatuses are linked therein via a network, the electronic apparatuses being for working to work in liaison with each other to implement a desired service,~~ the information management method comprising:

~~a service-specific information acquisition step for acquiring service-specific information~~ which (i) is related to a combination of types of electronic apparatuses required for implementing the service and (ii) contains information related to an application that is operable on each of the electronic apparatuses which implement the service and used for implementing the service;

~~a storage step for storing, in a storage section, the service-specific information acquired by the acquiring of the service-specific information acquisition step into a storage section;~~

~~an apparatus-specific information acquisition step for acquiring the apparatus-specific information related to each of the plurality of the electronic apparatus of the system apparatuses;~~

~~a request reception step for receiving a search request from the electronic apparatuses;~~

~~a search step for, searching for the service which can be implemented by the electronic apparatuses of the system, the searching being (i) conducted in response to the search request received by the receiving of the search request reception step, searching services which can be implemented by the electronic apparatuses, and (ii) based on the service-specific information stored in the storage section and the apparatus-specific information acquired by the acquiring of the apparatus-specific information acquisition step; and~~

~~a transmission step for transmitting, to the electronic apparatuses of the system, a search result (i) which is obtained by the searching for the service search step and (ii) which identifies-is information indicating a listing of services which can be implemented by the electronic apparatuses of the system; and~~

notifying the electronic apparatuses of the system that an updated version of the application, that is operable on each of the electronic apparatuses which implement the service, exists, if the stored service-specific information includes information related to the application

that, based on the search result, indicates that an updated version of the application is available.